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to be secured by some such as the foregoing plan.

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#### GRANA DE BRASILE

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I should be glad to learn what grain and what region were meant by "grana de Brasile" in the 1193 commercial treaty between the "Bononienses" and "Ferrarienses" copied by Muratori into Vol. 2 of his "Antiquitates Italicae," p. 844. He mentions (p. 488) the repetition of the same item in a "charta" of 1198.

Capmany's Spanish work on the early shipping arts, etc., of Barcelona copies in Vol. 2 several thirteenth century Catalan tariff lists, three of which (the earliest 1221) for that and other parts, respectively mention, among miscellaneous commodities, "Carrega de Brasil," "faix de bresil" and "cargua de brazil." The usual impost seems to have been two solidos. One of these lists mentions "grana" unqualified. There seems nothing to indicate what material was or was not meant, except the slight negative value of that reference.

It is interesting to see the variations of orthography in these lists, duplicating those of the Brazil west of southern Ireland on the fourteenth and fifteenth century maps, though Fra Mauro adds berzil and the more southern apparently imitative Brazils (Terciera and others) exhibit further vagaries of spelling. The first appearance of Brazil in geography seems to be, so far as reported, south of west of Limerick on the 1325 map of Dalorto.

Was it thence that the "grain" of 1193 and 1198 was supposed to have come? It can hardly be an error for dyes or dye woods, though both grain and dye wood may have been associated with the idea and name of Brazil, as we still write both India-ink and India-rubber.

W. H. BABCOCK

#### CONCERNING GOVERNMENT APPLICATION BLANKS

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: In former times when one wished to institute a comparison between the various classes of liars, he was accustomed to say "he lies like a horse-thief," or "he lies like a tombstone." Now, however,

those of us who are connected with the teaching profession are given to saying "he lies like a testimonial."

It seems a little too bad that one's natural tendency towards mendacity should be accelerated by no less a person than Uncle Sam. Some time ago I was asked to fill out a blank for an applicant for a teaching position in the Philippine Islands, and among other questions asked me were the following:

8. Is the applicant now, or has he ever been, addicted to the use of intoxicating beverages, morphine or opium?

14. Can you state positively that the applicant's character is unimpeachable, and his reputation for sobriety and morality unquestionably good?

The printed directions state that all questions must be answered and that to say "I don't know" is unsatisfactory. Now I feel confident that the young lady who did me the honor to ask me for a testimonial has not been addicted to the use of intoxicating beverages, morphine, or opium; but I could not make this statement as a positive fact about her or any other acquaintance of mine. Again, I believe the applicant's character to be unimpeachable, but I can not state positively that such is the case. This is a world of surprises and disappointments. I am most optimistic, but not sufficiently so to answer these questions in the affirmative. May we not hope that our new president-elect will take measures to relieve the tender consciences of college professors from the great strain that these government blanks put upon them?

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#### SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

*Richtlinien des Entwicklungs- und Vererbungsproblems.* By ALFRED GREIL, Professor of Anatomy, Innsbruck. Jena, Gustav Fischer. 1912. 2 parts.

The crude evolutionism of Bonnet gave place to the epigenesis of C. F. Woeff, and this, too indefinite to give sufficient explanation of the phenomena of cell differentiation, adaptation and inheritance, in turn was supplanted by a newer preformationism, at first